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ABSTRACT

To improve vocational educational programs in agriculture, occupational information on a common core of basic skills within the occupational area of the floral designer is presented in the revised task inventory survey. The purpose of the occupational survey was to identify a common core of basic skills which are performed and are essential for success in the occupation. Objectives were accomplished by constructing an initial task inventory to identify duty areas and task statements for the occupation. The initial task inventory was reviewed by consultants in the field and 137 tasks were identified. A random sample of 75 floral shops based on the 1975 mailing list of the Ohio Florist's Association was obtained. Data were collected utilizing employer and employee questionnaires. Seventy-five questionnaires were returned of which 46 were usable. A compilation of basic sample background information is presented on size of business, total work experience, employment at current job, and preparation as a floral designer. A compilation of duty areas of work performed and work essential for the occupation is given. Percentage performance by incumbent workers and the average level of importance of specific task statements are presented in tabular form. (Author/EC)

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DETERMINATION OF A COMMON CORE OF BASIC SKILLS IN AGRIBUSINESS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

An Emperical Determination Of Tasks Essential To Successful Performance As A Floral Designer

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
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AN EMPERICAL DETERMINATION OF TASKS ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESSFUL PERFORMANCE AS A FLORAL DESIGNER

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FOREWORD

The Department of Agricultural Education at The Ohio State University is involved in a major programmatic effort to improve the curricula in educational programs in agriculture. One product in this effort is this report of the floral designer task inventory survey. The data reported were collected as part of a more comprehensive thrust designed to develop a common core of basic skills in agribusiness and natural resources.

It is hoped that the revised task inventory contained in this report will be useful to curriculum developers working for improved occupational relevance in schools. Twenty-seven additional inventories in other occupational areas are also reported from this project.

The profession owes its thanks to Daniel R. Miller, graduate research associate, for his work in preparing this report. Special appreciation is also expressed to Dr. D.C. Kiplinger, Secretary-Treasurer, Ohio Florist's Association, for his input and help in securing the cooperation of those employed in this occupational area.

J. David McCracken
Project Director

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INTRODUCTION

Occupational information is needed to develop and revise vocational and technical education curricula. Teachers and curriculum developers generally determine which skills might be taught in a program based upon teacher expertise, advisory committee input, informal and formal community surveys, and/or task inventories.

The Agricultural Education Department at The Ohio State University has utilized and revised a system for obtaining and using occupational information as an effective aid in planning, improving, and updating occupational education curricula. This report presents the results of a task analysis survey of the occupation, floral designer. The information contained herein may be used by curriculum development specialists, teachers, local and state administrators, and others involved in planning and conducting vocational and technical programs in agriculture.

Purpose and Objectives

The major purpose of the occupational survey was to identify the skills which are performed and essential for success as a floral designer. The specific objectives of this survey were as follows:

1. Develop and validate an initial task inventory for the floral designer.
2. Identify the specific tasks performed by the floral designer.
3. Determine the relative importance of the specific tasks to successful employment as a floral designer.

Definition of the Occupational Area

The floral designer works in retail floral shops that sell directly to the public. The specific duties performed by the floral designer will vary with the size of business and the type of ownership. The floral designer is primarily involved with preparing floral arrangements for customers. In general, the floral designer handles and cares for flowers and plants in the shop; designs and constructs floral arrangements; wraps and packages floral arrangements; and may make sales to the public. Depending on the size of the business, the floral designer may be called a floral shop worker or a florist.

METHODOLOGY

Objectives were accomplished by constructing an initial task inventory, validating the initial inventory, selecting a sample of workers, collecting data, and analyzing data.

Initial Task Inventory

Duty areas and task statements for the floral designer were identified by searching existing task lists, job descriptions, curriculum guides, and reference publications. Additionally, contacts with several industry personnel aided in clarifying the specific responsibilities of the floral designer. All the tasks that the project staff thought to be performed were assembled into one composite list.

The initial tasks were grouped into functional areas called "Duties".

After the task statements were grouped under the proper duty areas, each task statement was reviewed for brevity, clarity, and consistency. In all, 181 task statements were included in the initial task inventory.

Initial Inventory Validation

After the initial task inventory was constructed, it was reviewed by ten consultants employed in flower shops. These consultants were either floral shop managers or designers.

The consultants were asked to respond to the initial task list inventory by performing the following activities:

1. Indicate whether any of the tasks listed were not appropriate.

2. Add any additional tasks they believed were performed by the floral designer.

3. Make changes in the wording of tasks to help add clarity to the statements.

The comments from the ten consultants were pooled and revisions were made as needed. Two new duty areas were added and two duty areas were combined.

As a result of the initial task inventory review process, 137 tasks were identified.

Worker Sample Selection

Since the specific duties and tasks performed by the floral designer are related to the size of business where employed, an attempt was made to survey floral designers employed in various size floral shops across Ohio. It was not possible to secure a list of specific names and addresses of all incumbent workers in the state. Therefore, a sample of 75 floral shops was obtained from the 1975 mailing list of the Ohio Florist's Association using a stratified random sampling approach. The strata used were size of business and geographical location.

Data Collection

A packet of materials was sent to the owner or manager of the randomly-selected floral shops. The packet of materials included:

1. A cover letter from the Ohio Florist's Association.

2. An employer questionnaire printed on blue.

3. An employee questionnaire printed on yellow.

4. A stamped and self-addressed return envelope.

The manager or owner of the floral shop was instructed to complete the employer questionnaire and to have a responsible floral designer complete the employee questionnaire. The manager or owner was instructed to complete the employee questionnaire and return both the employer and employee questionnaire in the stamped and self-addressed return envelope by the date specified in the cover letter.

A follow-up of non-respondents consisted of mailing a packet of materials two weeks after the initial mailing. The follow-up consisted of a packet of materials identical to the initial packet except that a cover letter on Ohio State University stationery replaced the cover letter on Ohio Florist's Association stationery.

Data Analysis

The 75 questionnaires which were returned were checked for completeness and accuracy by the project staff. Information from the 46 usable responses was coded on Fortran coding sheets for key punching. In addition to coding appropriate respondent background information, each specific task statement was coded as to whether it was performed (1 = Task performed by respondent; blank = Task not performed by respondent) and the level of importance of the task (3 = Essential; 2 = Useful; 1 = Not Important). The information was keypunched on IBM cards and verified by personnel at the Instruction and Research Computer Center at The Ohio State University.

The data was analyzed using the SOUPAC computer program and the facilities of the Instruction and Research Computer Center. Consultant assistance for analyzing the data was provided by personnel at The Center for Vocational Education. The SOUPAC computer analysis resulted in the computation of relative frequencies, means, and rankings for each task statement. The results of the computer analyses were printed in tabular form for ease of interpretation.

FINDINGS

Objectives of the study resulted in the compilation of basic

sample background information, the determination of tasks performed by the floral designer, and the identification of tasks essential to successful performance as a floral designer.

Description of the Sample

Information regarding the performance of tasks and the importance of the tasks to successful employment as a floral designer was obtained from floral designers in various floral shops across Ohio.

Response to the Survey

A total of 75 questionnaires were mailed and 51 replies were received. This represented a 68% rate of return. The response to the questionnaire is summarized in TABLE I.

TABLE I

EMPLOYEE RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

	N	Percent of All Employees In The Survey
Employees in Survey	75	100.0
Total Returns	51	68.0
Usable Returns	46	61.3
Unusable Returns	5	6.7
Nonrespondents	24	32.0

Size of Business

Floral designers from various size businesses were included in the study. The number of full-time equivalent (two one-half time floral designers equal one full-time equivalent) floral designers employed in the business was used as an index to assess the size of business where the floral designer was employed. Of the 51 questionnaires received, 46 included information regarding the size of the business. TABLE II summarizes the responses to the question, "How many full-time equivalent floral designers are employed in your business?" Ten floral designers or 21.7% were employed in firms employing two full-time equivalent floral designers. Ten floral designers or 21.7% were employed in firms employing four full-time equivalent floral designers. Ten floral designers or 21.7% were employed in firms employing six to ten

full-time equivalent floral designers. The number of full-time equivalent floral designers employed in the firms ranged from 1-19. The average number of full-time equivalent floral designers employed in the firms was 4.9.

TABLE II

SIZE OF FLORAL SHOP WHERE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED

Number of Floral Designers Employed in Firm	N	Percent of Respondents
1	3	6.5
2	10	21.7
3	5	10.9
4	10	21.7
5	5	10.9
6-10	10	21.7
11 or more	3	6.6
Total	46	100.0

$\bar{X}$ number of floral designers in the firm = 4.9

Total Work Experience

Floral designers with varying amounts of work experience in the floral industry were included in the study. TABLE III summarizes the responses to the question, "How many total years have you worked in the floral industry?" Fourteen floral designers or 30.4% had from one to three total years of work experience in the floral industry. Eight floral designers or 17.4% had from four to six total years of work experience in the floral industry. Eight floral designers or 17.4% had 21 or more years of total work experience in the floral industry. The total years of work experience in the floral industry ranged from 1-34 years. Floral designers had an average of 12.8 years of total work experience in the floral industry.

Employment at Current Job

Floral designers in the survey had spent varying amounts of time in their present job. TABLE IV summarizes the responses to the question, "How many years have you worked at your present job?"

TABLE III

TOTAL AMOUNT OF WORK EXPERIENCE IN THE FLORAL INDUSTRY

Years	N	Percent of Respondents
1-3	14	30.4
4-6	8	17.4
7-10	7	15.2
11-15	4	8.7
16-20	5	10.9
21 or more	8	17.4
Total	46	100.0

$\bar{X}$ years in the industry = 12.8

TABLE IV

LENGTH OF TIME AT PRESENT JOB

Years	N	Percent of Respondents
1-3	13	28.2
4-6	7	15.2
7-10	5	10.9
11-15	6	13.1
16-20	7	15.2
21 or more	8	17.4
Total	46	100.0

$\bar{X}$ years at present job = 10.2

Thirteen floral designers or 28.2% had worked at their present job from one to three years. Eight floral designers or 17.4% had worked at their present job 21 or more years. The years of work at their present job ranged from 1-34 years. Floral designers had been employed at their present job an average of 10.2 years.

Preparation as a Floral Designer

Floral designers obtained training for their job from various sources. TABLE V summarizes their responses to the question, "Where did you receive your training as a floral designer?" Forty-two floral designers or 91.3% indicated they received training on-the-job. Eleven floral designers or 23.9% indicated they attended a floral designing course to receive training as a floral designer. Four floral designers or 8.7% indicated they had received training as a floral designer by attending a high school program in horticulture.

TABLE V

SOURCE OF TRAINING RECEIVED AS A FLORAL DESIGNER

Source	N	Percent of All Employees In The Survey
On-The-Job	42	91.3
High School Program	4	8.7
Technical School Program	1	2.2
College/University Program	2	4.3
Adult Education Program	11	23.9
Floral Designing School	1	2.2
Other	3	6.5

Duty Areas of Work Performed by the Floral Designer

The 137 tasks were grouped under 16 duty areas. Each respondent indicated whether he performed the specific task in his current position as a floral designer. The percentages of respondents performing each task were averaged for all tasks under each duty area. The mean percentage of incumbents who performed specific tasks in specified duty areas is presented in TABLE VI.

Duty areas of work in which 50% or more of the incumbent workers performed the tasks were:

1. Performing General Office Work
2. Maintaining Facilities
3. Following Safety Precautions
4. Planning and Organizing Work Activities
5. Selling and Marketing Flowers and Accessories

6. Receiving Flowers, Plants, and Supplies from Wholesalers
7. Storing and Warehousing Flowers, Plants, and Supplies
8. Handling and Caring for Flowers and Plants in Retail Shops
9. Maintaining Equipment
10. Designing and Constructing Floral Arrangements
11. Wrapping and Packaging Arrangements and Designs
12. Designing Terrariums and Potting Plants

Duty Areas of Work Essential for Successful Performance as a Floral Designer

A level of importance rating was obtained for each task. The respondent could rate the task as essential, useful, or not important for successful performance as a floral designer. A ranking of essential was assigned a numerical rating of "3", useful a numerical rating of "2", and not important a numerical rating of "1". The level of importance ratings for each task were averaged for all tasks under each duty area. The average level of importance ratings for the specific tasks in the specified duty areas are presented in TABLE VI.

Duty areas of work which received a 2.0 or higher level of importance rating by incumbent workers were:

1. Performing General Office Work
2. Inventorying Products
3. Maintaining Facilities
4. Following Safety Precautions
5. Planning and Organizing Work Activities
6. Using and Maintaining Price Lists and Catalogs
7. Selling and Marketing Flowers and Accessories
8. Receiving Flowers, Plants, and Supplies from Wholesalers
9. Storing and Warehousing Flowers, Plants, and Supplies
10. Handling and Caring for Flowers and Plants in Retail Shops
11. Maintaining Equipment
12. Designing and Constructing Floral Arrangements
13. Wrapping and Packaging Arrangements and Designs
14. Designing Terrariums and Potting Plants

Percentage Performance and Level of Importance Ratings of Specific Tasks

The percentage performance by incumbent workers and the level of importance for each specific task is also presented in TABLE VI.

It is recommended that the results for each specific task be examined by educators and others who are developing educational

programs to determine curriculum content for preparing floral designers. Specific tasks with a high level of performance and a high level of importance rating should be given more emphasis in the educational program than specific tasks with a low level of performance and a low level of importance rating.

TABLE VI

PERCENTAGE PERFORMANCE AND AVERAGE RATING OF IMPORTANCE* OF SPECIFIC TASKS

TASK STATEMENTS	Percent Performing	Average Level of Importance
Performing General Office Work		
File office forms	45	1.8
Schedule appointments	50	1.7
Use telephone	91	2.8
Write memos, notes, and letters	65	2.0
Mean Rating	62.8	2.1
Recording Information		
Record customers' names in alphabetized directory	32	1.8
Mean Rating	32.0	1.8
Inventorying Products		
Assist in taking physical inventory	65	2.2
Establish estimated ordering quantity (EOQ)	41	2.0
Identify fast selling inventory items	65	2.4
Use card filing inventory system	17	1.6
Mean Rating	47.0	2.1
Maintaining Facilities		
Dispose of trash in work areas	71	2.3
Replace light bulbs	47	2.0
Sweep work area floors	82	2.5
Wash work tables and benches	76	2.4
Mean Rating	69.0	2.3
Following Safety Precautions		
Apply minor first aid to cuts and burns	76	2.3
Follow safe work habits	71	2.7
Identify potential safety hazards	65	2.5
Store chemicals safely	36	2.3
Use fire extinguishers	30	2.4

*Average rating of importance may range from 1-3 with 3 being the highest

TABLE VI (Cont.)

PERCENTAGE PERFORMANCE AND AVERAGE RATING OF IMPORTANCE OF SPECIFIC TASKS

TASK STATEMENTS	Percent Performing	Average Level of Importance
Wear appropriate protective clothing	58	2.1
Ventilate work areas	50	2.1
Mean Rating	55.1	2.3
Planning and Organizing Work Activities		
Plan arrangement of display cases	73	2.3
Plan daily work schedule	58	2.3
Organize a labeling system	30	1.8
Mean Rating	53.7	2.1
Using and Maintaining Price Lists and Catalogs		
Compare prices of similar products between companies	54	2.1
Determine which catalog materials are currently available	36	1.9
Interpret printed descriptions in catalogs	43	1.9
Keep current company catalogs on file	34	2.1
Mean Rating	41.8	2.0
Selling and Marketing Flowers and Accessories		
Complete sales slip	76	2.6
Coordinate customer's home colors and arrangements	71	2.5
Demonstrate the use of accessory items	67	2.3
Describe items to customers	86	2.5
Describe plant transplanting instructions to customers	76	2.3
Determine when merchandise is to be delivered	82	2.6
Display materials for customers	80	2.4
Greet customers	84	2.6
Interpret customers' descriptions of items	91	2.6
Interpret plant and flower care instructions for customers	80	2.6
Label merchandise	76	2.4
Make change	89	2.6
Price items for customers	84	2.6
Provide cards for customers	84	2.6

TABLE VI (Cont.)

PERCENTAGE PERFORMANCE AND AVERAGE RATING OF IMPORTANCE OF SPECIFIC TASKS

TASK STATEMENTS	Percent Performing	Average Level of Importance
Receive customer orders by telephone	91	2.8
Stock shelves and display cases	76	2.5
Use a customer credit plan	67	2.3
Use billing machine	32	1.6
Use cash register	91	2.6
Use floral wire service	86	2.7
Write advertisements	19	1.7
Mean Rating	75.6	2.4
Receiving Flowers, Plants, and Supplies from Wholesalers		
Group flowers of similar quality	71	2.3
Report quality of flowers to manager	84	2.7
Sort flowers according to appropriate uses	67	2.2
Sort flowers according to variety	71	2.3
Unpack flowers and open bunches	84	2.5
Mean Rating	75.4	2.4
Storing and Warehousing Flowers, Plants and Supplies		
Evaluate affect improper flower and plant storage has on quality	58	2.2
Remove damaged items from storage	78	2.2
Rotate stock in refrigerated storage	78	2.4
Store foliage in packing boxes in refrigerated units	67	2.3
Store prepared foliage such as grasses and seed pods in dust-free cartons	45	2.1
Store soft and leafy foliage in damp papers in refrigerated units	63	2.2
Mean Rating	64.8	2.2
Handling and Caring for Flowers and Plants in Retail Shops		
Add commercial flower preservatives to water in containers	82	2.5
Change water in containers	78	2.6

TABLE VI (Cont.)

PERCENTAGE PERFORMANCE AND AVERAGE RATING OF IMPORTANCE OF SPECIFIC TASKS

TASK STATEMENTS	Percent Performing	Average Level of Importance
Classify corsage flowers such as single blossom flowers and bunch form	71	2.2
Crush stems on certain flowers	80	2.6
Cut flower stems	86	2.8
Determine appropriate storage temperatures	47	2.2
Determine storage expectancy for flowers	43	2.3
Evaluate influence absorption has on wilting	34	2.1
Evaluate influence humidity has on transpiration	32	2.2
Evaluate influence refrigeration has on bacteria growth	32	2.1
Evaluate influence refrigeration has on evaporation	26	2.1
Evaluate influence stale water has on stem tissue	45	2.3
Identify flowers most likely to bleed	60	2.2
Maintain proper water level in containers	80	2.6
Remove lower foliage and wilted petals from flowers and plants	84	2.5
Reseal fresh stem cuts on certain flowers	65	2.2
"Skin" rose stems	69	2.1
Tint flowers	82	2.2
Trim flowers and plants	84	2.5
Use appropriate techniques to prevent discolor of petals	47	2.2
Wire buds, blooms, leaves, and foliage removed from flowers for use in corsages and wrapping decorations	76	2.3
Mean Rating	62.0	2.3
Maintaining Equipment		
Evaluate influence dirt in containers has on longevity of plants	45	2.2
Rinse and wash containers	78	2.5
Wash refrigeration cases	67	2.4
Mean Rating	63.3	2.4
Using and Maintaining Hand and Power Tools		
Adjust tools	41	1.7
Clean tools	56	2.0
Identify tools	58	2.0
Interpret tool operation instructions	39	1.9

TABLE VI (Cont.)

PERCENTAGE PERFORMANCE AND AVERAGE RATING OF IMPORTANCE OF SPECIFIC TASKS

TASK STATEMENTS	Percent Performing	Average Level of Importance
Recondition tools	28	1.7
Select tools for specific jobs	54	2.0
Sharpen tools	41	1.9
Store tools	47	2.0
Use hand tools safely	54	2.1
Use power tools safely	39	2.1
Mean Rating	45.7	1.9
Designing and Constructing Floral Arrangements		
Apply appropriate preservatives to arrangements	91	2.7
Arrange fruit baskets	65	2.1
Attach cards and lettering to arrangements	93	2.9
Construct a funeral blanket	78	2.6
Construct a funeral spray or wreath	91	2.7
Construct bouquets	91	2.8
Construct boutonniere	91	2.7
Construct corsages	86	2.8
Construct ribbon puffs	73	2.4
Construct wedding fans and muffs	65	2.3
Cut plants and material to size	86	2.5
Establish the focal points of the arrangement	93	2.8
Establish the lines for the arrangement	93	2.8
Fill in arrangements with flowers and foliage	93	2.8
Identify common kinds of foliage	89	2.6
Identify various geometric floral shapes	82	2.5
Identify various kinds of flowers	89	2.7
Select appropriate accessories for arrangements and occasions	86	2.6
Select appropriate flowers and foliage	89	2.6
Select appropriate geometric shape for the arrangement	84	2.5
Select containers for arrangements	91	2.6
Select the appropriate basic design for various occasions	93	2.6
Spray paint floral arrangement	86	2.1
Use appropriate holding devices	86	2.5
Use flora tape in corsages	91	2.6
Use water picks in arrangements	82	2.1

TABLE VI (Cont.)

PERCENTAGE PERFORMANCE AND AVERAGE RATING OF IMPORTANCE OF SPECIFIC TASKS

TASK STATEMENTS	Percent Performing	Average Level of Importance
Use wire to construct arrangements and corsages	91	2.7
Mean Rating	86.2	2.6
Wrapping and Packaging Arrangements and Designs		
Address packages	80	2.5
Attach cards to boxes and arrangements	91	2.7
Decorate packages with accessories	67	2.0
Select appropriate packaging materials for destination	69	2.3
Select appropriate wrapping material	78	2.4
Use boxes to package items	80	2.3
Use cord, string, or tape to secure boxes	82	2.3
Use insulating materials when packaging	54	2.0
Use plastic bags, wax paper, and cellophane to wrap before packaging	82	2.4
Wrap and package potted plants	86	2.6
Mean Rating	76.9	2.4
Designing Terrariums and Potting Plants		
Add soil and filler material to containers	78	2.5
Decorate containers	76	2.3
Fill containers with soil	76	2.5
Identify terrarium plants by name	60	2.3
Select containers for plants	76	2.5
Select plants for terrariums	76	2.5
Use accessories in terrariums	73	2.4
Mean Rating	73.6	2.4